

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

10/672,642

Examiner

Scott Haugland

Applicant(s)

MIKELSONS ET AL.

Art Unit

3654

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to the amendment filed 8/26/05.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 32,34-37,40-42,48 and 69-71.
3. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
- (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
- 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

- ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08), Paper No./Mail Date _____
- ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413), Paper No./Mail Date _____
- ☐ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
- ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
- ☐ Other _____

Kathy Matecki
KATHY MATECKI
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3600

REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

The prior art of record, taken as a whole, fails to disclose or render obvious a method for loading an elongated strand of food product of a given diameter on a transport conveyor comprising all the limitations claimed, including providing an entrance guide as an idle roller spaced rearwardly and downwardly of the upstream end of the first loading conveyor and feeding the strand upwardly to the idle roller and then upwardly and forwardly to the upstream end of the first loading conveyor as recited in claim 69. While Karius discloses an idle roller 16 upstream of the entrance end of a conveyor for a strand of food product, there is no suggestion of providing the apparatus of Wallace (Pat. No. 3,620,431) with an idle roller upstream and below the entrance of the first and second loading conveyors 39 of Wallace. There is no suggestion of replacing conveyor 32 or roller 31 with or adding an idle roller in the claimed position relative to the entrance of the first loading conveyor. It is noted that the conveyors of Karius are arranged horizontally and offer no support for strand entering, but not yet between the conveyors, thus requiring an idle roller upstream of the conveyors.

The prior art of record, taken as a whole, fails to disclose or render obvious a method for loading an elongated strand of food product of a given diameter on a transport conveyor comprising all the limitations claimed, including providing a faceplate blocking access to the rotary conveyor pulleys from an operator loading station and providing an entrance guide as an inlet through the faceplate as recited in claim 70. It is noted that element 80 of Karius is a tying device located at the outlet of the conveyors

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(col. 1, lines 9-13; col. 3, lines 17-20) and not a faceplate having an inlet through it forming an entrance guide to the conveyors.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Scott Haugland whose telephone number is (571) 272-6945. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Thursday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Kathy Matecki can be reached on (571) 272-6951. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


sjh
9/15/05